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COMMISSION

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*Memorandum*

TO: Partnership Board

DATE: March 17, 2006

FR: Jeff Georgevich

W. I. 1229

RE: Regional Emergency Management Program

MTC has been involved in regional emergency preparedness since the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989. After that event, the region's transportation agencies developed a set of interagency procedures to respond to future disasters. This effort resulted in the Trans Response Plan (TRP), which was adopted by the Partnership in 1997, as well as a master mutual aid agreement among the nine largest transit agencies. The resulting procedures are tested on an annual basis through tabletop and functional exercises. In addition, MTC has worked with the region's largest transit agencies to coordinate investments in security improvements and with the California Highway Patrol (CHP) to improve communications among first responders to major incidents. These activities are detailed in Attachment 1.

Although progress has been made to improve the Bay Area's preparedness for a major emergency, significant work remains to achieve a satisfactory level of readiness. In February, MTC's Operations Committee approved a proposal to establish a Regional Emergency Management Program focusing on two key areas: inter-agency communications and preparation of detailed emergency response plans.

**Interagency Communications**

**Radio Interoperability**

Phase 1 of MTC's work with CHP to improve radio interoperability for first responders was completed in February, and produced recommendations for deploying a regional 'communications gateway' system. This gateway system is a short-term solution that will allow currently incompatible radio systems (UHF, VHF, 800 MHz, etc) to communicate with each other over a mutual aid channel or other system. This system is likely to be replaced by more robust communication interoperability systems that are being developed by most counties based on newer technologies and standards. However, it will take several years for the majority of Bay Area first responder agencies to purchase and install the new technologies.

Per the SAFE Committee's action in September 2005, the gateway system will be deployed initially in Sonoma, Marin and Napa Counties at a cost of \$300,000. This will allow a test of the system before expanding to the remaining six counties. The cost to complete the system in the remaining six counties could be as high as an additional \$600,000. The initial deployment has been funded with \$300,000 from SAFE reserves. Funding for the remaining six counties will be addressed in the 2006-07 Budget.

## **Satellite Telephones**

During a major Bay Area disaster (earthquake, major flooding, etc.), a significant portion of the land-based communications system (landline telephone, cellular telephone, radio towers, etc.) could become unusable, and the portion of the system that survives may be severely congested and unreliable. To ensure that key transportation decision-makers will be able to communicate with each other immediately following a disaster, MTC will equip the eleven major transportation agency Emergency Operations Centers (MTC, Caltrans, CHP, AC Transit, BART, County Connection, Golden Gate Transit, SamTrans, VTA and Vallejo), the Coastal Region Office of Emergency Services (OES) and each of the nine County Operational Areas with a stationary satellite telephone system. MTC will pay the cost to purchase and install the stationary telephone in each EOC, and pay the annual fees through June 30, 2007. Starting July 1, 2007, we propose that each agency will assume the responsibility for paying the approximately \$1100 annual fee for each telephone. In addition, MTC will provide the chief executive officer of each of the eleven transportation agencies with a mobile satellite telephone, and again pay the service fees through June 30, 2007. The total cost for the 21 stationary and 11 mobile satellite telephones is estimated to be \$250,000.

## **Regional Transportation Emergency Operations Plan**

As described in Attachment 1, the existing Trans Response Plan defines the functions, responsibilities, and procedures for developing a multimodal response to an emergency. The purpose of the proposed Regional Transportation Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is to go beyond the generic process-oriented framework of the TRP and develop a more detailed definition of responsibilities and procedures based on specific scenarios. The project will produce at least three scenario-specific EOPs, and a series of tabletop and functional exercises. Each EOP and exercise will focus on communication, coordination, and decision-making among the agencies that have significant regional roles and responsibilities (Coastal Region OES, Caltrans, CHP, MTC) and the transit agencies that provide services to multiple counties.

Work on the Regional Transportation EOP will be closely coordinated with the Regional Emergency Coordination Plan under development by San Francisco OES. That plan is looking at the broader set of functions (e.g., mass care and shelter, hazardous materials, etc.) that must be coordinated in the event of any major disaster, and will address transportation as one element of that comprehensive response. The proposed Regional Transportation EOP will address the more specific operating responsibilities of each transportation agency. The two efforts are intended to result in a single, comprehensive and internally consistent plan.

The EOP project will reflect existing emergency operating procedures from the regional transportation agencies; identify conflicts, inconsistencies and gaps between the existing plans and procedures; present options for addressing the conflicts, inconsistencies and gaps; and provide training and exercises to test the selected solutions. Because the EOP will require dedicated involvement of the transportation agencies and County Operational Areas, staff will recommend that up to \$200,000 be reserved in the 2006-07 MTC budget to support participating agencies for a portion of the staff time necessitated by the EOP exercises.

## Program Budget Summary

The following table summarizes the budget for the Regional Emergency Management Program.

### **2005-06 Budget for Regional Emergency Management Program**

<b>Project</b>	<b>2005-06 Funds required</b>	<b>2005-06 SAFE Budget</b>	<b>Other Sources (STA, FHWA PL)</b>
Radio Interoperability	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$0
Satellite Telephones	\$250,000	\$150,000	\$100,000
Regional Transportation EOP	\$600,000	\$460,000	\$140,000
Staff and Support	\$36,000	\$0	\$36,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,186,000</b>	<b>\$910,000</b>	<b>\$276,000</b>

### **2006-07 Budget for Regional Emergency Management Program**

<b>Project</b>	<b>2006-07 Funds required</b>	<b>Proposed Source</b>
Radio Interoperability	\$600,000	MTC SAFE
Regional Transportation EOP	\$200,000	FHWA PL
Staff and Support	\$139,000	FHWA PL
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$939,000</b>	

### Next Steps:

- 1. Communications Interoperability:** The regional overview has been completed, and MTC and CHP are working with Napa, Marin and Sonoma Counties to demonstrate the utility of a multi-county 'gateway' system by the end of the calendar year.
- 2. Satellite telephones** will be purchased and installed by the end of the calendar year.
- 3.** The transportation agencies will hold a **regionwide exercise** of the Trans Response Plan on **March 30**. The transportation agencies will participate with the regional and counties Offices of Emergency Services in the real-time, functional "Golden Guardian" exercise on **November 15 and 16**, which will include testing the initial recommendations from the Regional Transportation Emergency Operations Plan project.

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## **CURRENT MTC ACTIVITIES RELATED TO EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS** (January 2006)

### **Trans Response Plan**

MTC played an important role in coordinating the response to the Loma Prieta earthquake. The earthquake occurred at 5:04 p.m. on Tuesday, October 17. MTC's Transit Operators Coordinating Council was already scheduled to meet on Thursday, and that meeting was used to bring together key transportation agencies to develop emergency plans and services that would help respond to the closure of the Bay Bridge, Cypress Freeway in Oakland, Embarcadero Freeway in San Francisco, and Route 17 in the Santa Cruz Mountains. This led to several key actions, including instituting 24-hour BART service, extension of Caltrain service south of San Jose, new ferry services which were coordinated with bus service, HOV lanes added to several freeway segments, and opening of portions of the new CC-580 freeway. The various agencies held a major press conference and distributed maps with new services.

Over the next several years, the transportation agencies worked together to develop a set of interagency procedures to ensure that the successful response to the Loma Prieta Earthquake would be replicated for future disasters, and to test those procedures through tabletop and functional exercises. This effort resulted in the Trans Response Plan (TRP), which was adopted by the Partnership in 1997, as well as a master mutual aid agreement between the nine largest transit agencies. The TRP defines the functions, responsibilities and procedures for developing and implementing a comprehensive multimodal transportation response to a regional emergency. The intended result is a coordinated transportation response within the overall Statewide Emergency Management System (SEMS) and National Incident Management System (NIMS). Each transit agency provides the County Operational Areas and MTC with a copy of its situation summary. MTC prepares a situation summary for the regional transportation system, and provides it to the Bay Area transportation agencies and the Regional Emergency Operations Center (REOC). The TRP states that MTC will fill three key roles:

- Regional Transportation Information Clearinghouse, which develops status reports and preliminary damage assessments;
- Regional Transportation Public Information, by facilitating news media and other public access to information on the region's transportation system; and
- Regional Transportation Coordination, by identifying key transportation problems and areas where essential coordination is needed, and requesting the appropriate agencies to respond.

MTC, Caltrans and the largest transit agencies have been holding annual functional exercises based on the TRP since 1997. MTC chairs the TRP Steering Committee, which is responsible for planning and evaluating the annual exercises. The first several years focused on various earthquake scenarios, but in 2003 and 2004, the focus shifted to terrorist attacks. The next regionwide functional exercise of the TRP is scheduled for March 30, 2006, and will use a scenario similar to the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake.

### **Regional Transit Security Working Group (RTSWG)**

MTC is a member of the Regional Transit Security Working Group (RTSWG), which includes the California Office of Homeland Security, the region's five rail operators (ACE, BART, CalTrain, Muni and VTA), Golden Gate transit, and two bus operators (AC Transit and Muni). The transit agencies have conducted security assessments, which were used to develop both the

Regional Transit Security Strategy and the allocation of 2005 U.S. Department of Homeland Security funds (\$7 million for the rail operators and \$2 million for the bus operators). During 2005, MTC worked with the largest Bay Area transit agencies and identified a need for over \$630 million in security improvements. The RTSWG identified a \$63 million list of top priority investments. In December 2005, the Partnership approved a proposal to use \$31 million of FTA funds to ensure that those top priority projects would be delivered within the next few years.

### **Improvements to Radio Interoperability**

MTC and CHP have been working together since September 2005 to improve radio interoperability in the Bay Area, including work on a consultant contract to implement the Bay Area Tactical Emergency Communications System (BARTECS). The goal is to improve direct communications between first responders to an incident. "First responders" refers to the agencies and departments that are the first to respond to an incident, which entails everything from a collision on a freeway to a major natural disaster. The first responders to an incident typically come from several different agencies, and for a freeway collision, can include CHP, Caltrans, FSP tow trucks, fire department, and emergency medical personnel. The first responder agencies typically have their own radio systems, and are unable to talk to each other or to an incident commander. Phase 1 of the two-phase contract will be completed in February, and will produce recommendations for a regional 'communications gateway' system. The BARTECS regional gateway system is a short-term solution that will link separate systems through an audio switch, to allow currently incompatible radio systems to communicate with each other over a mutual aid channel or other joint system. This system will eventually be replaced by more robust communication interoperability systems based on newer technologies and standards. However, it is expected to take at least ten years for the majority of Bay Area first responder agencies to purchase and install the new technologies. Interagency agreements for governance, standard operating procedures, and training and exercises will also be developed. The Freeway Management Executive Committee approved the recommendation to initially deploy the regional gateway in Sonoma, Marin and Napa Counties.